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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

James C. Sleigh,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR

John Snowdon
M.S.I.A., C.S.I.B.

FOR THE YEAR 1954.

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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T
of the
M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H

James C. Sleigh,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

S E N I O R S A N I T A R Y I N S P E C T O R

John Snowdon
M.S.I.A., C.S.I.B.

FOR THE YEAR 1954.

HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1954

Chairman: Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. L.W. Edgell.

Mrs.C. West	Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.
Mr. E. Ackroyd	Mr. N.H. Jones
Mr. A. Clark	Mr. C.F. Putterill, C.A.
Mr. L.S. Collingridge	Mr. D.E. Sanders
Mr. C.W. Curl	Mr. R.G. Taylor
Mr. F.M. Drake	Mr. L. Townend
Mr. L.T. Fowler	

Public Health Committee

Chairman: Mr. A. Clark

Mrs.C. West	Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.
Mr. E. Ackroyd	Mr. D.E. Sanders
Mr. C.W. Curl	Mr. R.G. Taylor
Mr. L.S. Collingridge	Mr. L. Townend
Mr. L.T. Fowler	

URBAN DISTRICT OF HARPENDEN

To the Chairman and Councillors of the
Harpenden Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report on the health of Harpenden for the year 1954.

The general health of the district remained good throughout the year, except for a moderately severe epidemic of Whooping Cough (147 cases).

The crude death rate has fallen from 10.74 per thousand to 8.38, and the birth rate risen from 13.80 to 14.63 per thousand but, of course, in dealing with small numbers one must be prepared for considerable fluctuations from year to year in these rates.

To you Mr. Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen, I wish to record my sincere thanks for all consideration and help you have at all times shown me, and to my staff I wish to record my sincere thanks for their effort and conscientious performance of their duties.

I am also deeply indebted to the Chief Clerk and Secretary in the Divisional Health Office for their assistance in the preparation of the statistics for this report and for the many extra duties carried out by them during the year, which were actually outside their Divisional Health Office duties.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J.C. SLEIGH,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	3,157
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	..				15,040
Number of inhabited houses on the Rate Books:	..			..
Inhabitated dwelling-houses (including flats and huts but excluding caravans)	..			..	4,733
Shops with living accommodation	..			..	76
Licensed premises with living accommodation	..			..	23
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	£153,053
Sum represented by a penny rate	..		..	..	£605

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births - Legitimate	..	103	112	215
Illegitimate	..	2	3	5
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	..	..	..	14.63
Still Births	..	1	2	3
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 total live and still births)	..	..	..	13.45
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 of estimated population)	..	..	..	0.20
Deaths	..	52	74	126
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	..	..	..	8.38

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Deaths from Pregnancy, Childbirth, or Abortion.</u>	-	1	1
Rate per 1,000 (total live and stillbirths)	4.48

The interval between maternal condition and death was stated to exceed 12 months.

Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.

Legitimate ..	1	-	1
Illegitimate ..	-	-	-
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age (all infants per 1,000 live births) ..	..	..	4.55
Neonatal Death Rate ..	..	..	-

Births. The number of births during 1954 was 220.

Deaths. There were 126 deaths.

The Infant Mortality rate of 4.55 is very satisfactory. In actual fact it represents one death, that death being due to congenital defects and, in our present state of knowledge not preventable, but once again I must warn you that in dealing with small numbers, this rate is bound to fluctuate markedly from year to year.

The number of Infant Deaths under 1 year of age was one, the cause of death in this case being congenital defects. This was a hospital case, and the age at death was one month.

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CAUSES OF DEATH

<u>Cause.</u>			<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	..	1	-	
2.	Tuberculosis, other	..	-	-	
3.	Syphilitic Diseases	..	-	-	
4.	Diphtheria	..	-	-	
5.	Whooping Cough	..	-	-	
6.	Meningococcal infections	..	-	-	
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	..	-	-	
8.	Measles	..	-	-	
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	..	-	-	
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	..	2	1	) 29 Cancer.
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	..	4	2	
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	..	-	3	
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	..	-	3	
14.	Other lymphatic and malignant Neoplasms	..	8	6	
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	..	-	-	
16.	Diabetes	..	-	-	
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	..	7	19	
18.	Coronary disease, angina	..	8	7	) 34 Heart Disease.
19.	Hypertension	..	1	6	
20.	Other heart disease	..	5	7	
21.	Other circulatory disease	..	2	4	
22.	Influenza	..	-	-	
23.	Pneumonia	..	2	2	
24.	Bronchitis	..	1	1	
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	..	1	1	
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	..	2	-	
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	..	-	-	
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	..	1	-	
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	..	2	-	
C/fwd		..	47	62	

	<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
		B/fwd ..	47	62
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	..	-	1
31.	Congenital malformations	..	1	-
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	..	-	9
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	..	4	-
34.	All other accidents	..	-	-
35.	Suicide	..	-	2
36.	Homicide and operations of war	..	-	-
			—	—
	<u>Totals</u>	..	52	74
			==	==

Cancer Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 1.93

Heart Disease

Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 2.26

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SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Welfare Centres and Clinics.

The County Council Child Welfare Clinics are now held at No. 40 Luton Road on the first and third Wednesday afternoons of each month and at Batford J.M.I. school on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons.

This arrangement is working very well. At Batford we are deeply indebted to the Headmaster, Mr. Walton, for his enthusiastic co-operation. Plans for a new school in the Batford area are being worked out to include more satisfactory arrangements for the holding of Child Welfare Clinics in the school building.

The Ophthalmic Clinic is also held at No. 40 Luton Road, but it was not until May 1954 that we were able to open a Dental Clinic. This is open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday forenoons, by appointment only.

National Health Service Act.

The Divisional Administration of the health services administered by the Local Health Authority, the County Council, continues to work very smoothly and an increasing amount of detailed administration is being passed out to Divisional Health Offices from Hertford. I need only mention the Home Help service, Ambulance service and supervision of County Council cars.

The records available in the Divisional Health Office on Local Health Authority work are of the greatest value to me in my local Sanitary Authority (Medical Officer of Health) work, especially in what is my most difficult job, assessing medical points for housing applications.

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Ambulance Service.

I am indebted to Divisional Officer R. Hughes for the following information:

Districts of St. Albans and Harpenden.

Year ending 31st December, 1954.

Details of the calls dealt with during the above period are given below. A further increase has again to be reported.

	<u>Accident.</u>	<u>Sudden</u>	<u>Removals.</u>	<u>Mater-</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Mileage.</u>
		<u>Illness.</u>		<u>nity.</u>		<u>Journeys.</u>	
1954	95	30	3,751	33	3,909	971	32.193
Increase and decrease over 1953	+7	+2	+478	-9	+478	+52	+13,806

These figures once again show a very considerable increase in the demand made on the Ambulance service, being approximately 22% above last year, which was 22% above the previous year.

I feel that something definitely must be done to limit this continued increase in calls on the Ambulance Service, but cannot see any effective means of doing so except by making a charge to the patient. The great bulk of the increase is due to cases going to and from hospital and it might be represented that this is due to earlier discharge of patients as in-patients and bringing them up to the hospitals as out-patients.

Now the decision as to whether the patient requires an ambulance or can travel to and from the hospital by ordinary public transport rests with, as a rule, a junior medical officer on the hospital staff. In the nature of things he cannot be familiar with the transport systems available. He is very busy, and the patient asks for an ambulance. He has not the knowledge of local conditions to say, in many cases, that the patient could quite well travel by public transport, and even if he had, he is only liable to get himself into serious trouble by refusing ambulance calls. In fact,

he is very liable to be blackmailed into ordering an ambulance.

Now if the patient had to pay, shall we say, 50% above the cost of him travelling by public transport, this would give a definite incentive to the patient to ask the doctor "Would it not be possible for me to travel by bus or train?" and I feel certain that the calls on the Ambulance Service if this system were instituted would be considerably less.

Hospitals.

The Harpenden Memorial Hospital forms part of the Luton and Hitchin Group administered by the Management Committee under the North-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. Four House Committees have been appointed by the Management Committee, one of which is concerned with this Hospital and for this purpose the Hospital is linked with Welwyn and Stevenage.

Statistics.

Year ended December 1954.

<u>Bed complement</u>	-	Surgical and Medical	..	18	
		Maternity	..	<u>12</u>	30
<u>Average daily number of available beds</u>			..		30
<u>Admissions</u>	..	..	..		593
<u>Number of Births</u>	-	Live	..	..	243
		Still	..	..	3
<u>Average daily number of occupied beds</u>			..		19.2

Out-patient Departments:

<u>Physiotherapy Dept.</u>	<u>New Patients.</u>	<u>Attendances.</u>
In -patients	34	674
Out-patients	693	8,827
<u>Casualty Dept.</u>	557	615
<u>Specialist Consultations</u>	228	248

General Nutrition.

Poor nutrition is rare and often is the result of fussing parents indulging food fads. Under-weight children often are of small birth weight or have small parents.

I must emphasise that there is no fixed weight for age. Both weight and height vary within pretty wide limits in completely healthy children.

Nursing in the Home.

The District Nursing Sisters are available for all cases of domiciliary nursing which includes Midwifery and General Nursing and in all cases where there is illness in the home where a request is made personally or at the request of the Doctor in attendance.

All notifications of measles and whooping cough and diseases where skilled nursing is particularly necessary are passed on at once to the District Nurse so that if she has not already been called in she can offer her services.

Home Help Service.

This service is administered by the Hertfordshire County Council and provides domestic help for households where such help is required owing to the presence of any person who is ill, lying-in, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged, or a child not over school age within the meaning of the Education Act, 1944.

The Organiser, who is a member of the Divisional Health Department Staff, receives requests from doctors, health visitors, midwives, hospital almoners and welfare organisations. No one

is denied help on financial grounds and every case can be assessed according to the family income.

The service is proving extremely popular. So much so, in fact, that we are unable to provide all the home help that is desired because we cannot get sufficient numbers of Home Helps. This is particularly difficult in the period Christmas - Easter when, of course, illness is at its height and one must remember that illness affects Home Helps as well as other members of the community.

Health Visiting.

There are two Health Visitors in the area. They are employed for the visiting of persons in their homes for the purpose of giving advice as to the care of young children, old persons, persons suffering from illness, and expectant or nursing mothers, and as to the measures necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

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SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.

The Public Water Supply is provided by the Harpenden Water Company from boreholes at Shakespeare Road and East Hyde, both fairly near the River Lee which is well known to be highly polluted with sewage. The water is therefore chlorinated, a very necessary precaution, but we do get a fair number of complaints regarding taste. Whether in fact these complaints of taste are all due to chlorine in the water is highly doubtful but there can be no question of stopping chlorination of a water supply derived from an area so near a known heavily polluted stream such as the River Lee.

Sewage Disposal.

I am indebted to Mr. H. Pettingale, the Council's Engineer and Surveyor for the following details:

The total quantity of sewage treated at the Sewage Works was 241,775,000 gallons compared with 234,402,000 gallons in 1953.

The rainfall was 31.40 inches compared with 24.85 inches in 1953.

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SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Slum Clearance.

I receive representations from Private Medical Practitioners, Tenants and others, that such and such a house is in a disgraceful condition and should be demolished. In many cases I have to agree with them that the house is bad but before recommending demolition I have to consider re-housing the tenants and this involves placing still further down the housing list others who have been waiting years, after living with in-laws, in "rooms" or in over-crowded conditions, and this requires very careful balancing of the relative needs.

Re-housing.

This is still the greatest problem confronting the Council. The points scheme is in use and in addition all certificates from medical practitioners requesting priority for any of their patients are submitted to me as Medical Officer of Health. I have the power to allocate additional points on medical grounds without disclosing my reasons for doing so. In extreme cases I also have the power of giving absolute priority but this power I am very unwilling to use as, of course, if this power were abused it would ruin the whole points scheme with which I am completely in favour.

The duty thus imposed on me is a very difficult one and I have no doubt that on occasions I shall make mistakes but I can assure the Council that I shall do my utmost to make their housing scheme work as fairly as humanly possible, bearing in mind the very large and urgent demand for houses.

Points are allotted independently of me for such conditions as over-crowding. I therefore never give points for conditions which already attract points under the Housing points scheme.

Surveys have been carried out under the 1954 Housing, Rent and Repairs Act, and certain figures will be laid before the Minister during August, 1955.

I am afraid the Act, like many other Acts, may well produce results by no means intended by Parliament. In this area there are a great number of houses let at rents, including rates, of anything from 5s:0d. to 10s:0d. per week, with a gross annual value of under £10. Now the maximum increase in rent permitted under the Act, after full repairs have been carried out, is up to twice the annual gross rateable value and no more. Taking the instance of a house with an annual gross rateable value of £10, this means that the rent can only be increased to a maximum of £20 per annum, whereas the cost of repairs to bring the house up to the necessary standard may well amount to £200.

It is not difficult to see that owners are, to put it mildly, reluctant to spend a sum even approaching such a figure when they would not get it back within a reasonable time. They, not unnaturally, reply to the request for carrying out such repairs "Make a Demolition Order - I am not going to spend any more money on this house!", yet such houses are by no means always impossible of repair. Many, however, are in such a condition that it would be physically impossible to carry out these repairs whilst the tenants are in occupation. It is necessary, therefore, for the Council to re-house such people whilst the repairs are being carried out. The owner then has vacant possession. He carries out the repairs plus, in some cases, improvements, and can then sell the house with vacant possession at a reasonable profit to himself. This may sound unfair to the Local Authority, but I would point out that by doing so, they still have the house instead of a Demolition Order, which would require re-housing in any case.

Number of new houses and flats erected during the year:

(a)	By the Local Authority	..	..	61
(b)	By Private Enterprise	..	..	136
		+	+	+

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:

(i) (a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	..	..	..	192
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	..	560
(ii) (a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations 1925	..	..	..	-
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	..	..	-
(iii)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation			..	14
(iv)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	..	..	..	2

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notice:

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	33
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during this year:

A. Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of
the Housing Act 1936:

(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	..	..	-
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses rendered fit after service of Formal Notices:			
(a)	By Owners	..	..	-
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners		..	-

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(i)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	..	..	45
(ii)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of Formal Notices:			
(a)	By Owners	..	..	2
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners		..	-

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food Poisoning Outbreaks.

<u>Total Number of outbreaks.</u>	<u>Number of cases.</u>	<u>Number of deaths.</u>	<u>Organisms or other Agents responsible with number of out- breaks of each.</u>	<u>Foods involved with number of outbreaks of each.</u>
-	1	-	Salmonella Montevideo (1)	-

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1954.

<u>Disease.</u>		<u>Total cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever	..	13	-
Whooping Cough	..	147	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	..	-	-
Measles	..	2	-
Diphtheria	..	-	-
Pneumonia	..	6	-
Dysentery	..	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	..	-	-
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	..	-	-
Erysipelas	..	3	-
Meningococcal Infection	..	1	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	..	-	-
Malaria	..	-	-
Undulant Fever	..	-	-
Cerebro Spinal Fever	..	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	..	8	-
Food Poisoning	..	1	-
Gastro Enteritis	..	1	-
Pneumococcal Meningitis	..	2	-
	+	+	+

Diphtheria Immunisation:

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1954:

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
224	15
<u>Total:</u>	239

Number of children who were given a secondary or reinforcing injection (i.e. subsequent to complete Full Course):

Total: 271

Births for the same area	..	..	220
Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births		..	108.6

The numbers shown above include 99 children who received combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria immunisation injections from general practitioners.

Of the total shown, 60 primary immunisation and 150 reinforcing injections were given at County Council clinics.

The primary immunisation rate of 108.6% of births is certainly extremely satisfactory, and I feel requires some explanation. The fact that it exceeds the theoretical possible of 100% is due to the take up of a certain amount of back-lag.

I think we can safely assume that practically speaking, 100% of the children in Harpenden are immunised, owing to the great interest displayed by the general practitioners, health visitors, and nurses.

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Whooping Cough:

On the 16th March 1953 the County Council scheme under Section 26 of the National Health Service Act 1946 was extended to cover protection against Whooping Cough.

It is obviously wise to immunise children as soon as possible, because by far the greatest danger occurs in the first year.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1954:

Age at date of final injection:

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
179	-
<u>Total:</u>	179.

Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births 81%

These figures include 99 children who received a primary immunisation with a combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria vaccine.

I am particularly pleased at the primary immunisation rate of 81% of the births receiving immunisation against Whooping Cough. This is at an early stage yet and I believe it will very soon, now that we are using a combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria vaccine, come up to the same percentage as Diphtheria.

One or two cases of Whooping Cough have occurred in children who have been immunised, but they have all been very mild, and this probably represents the best possible outcome of immunisation, in that if they get a mild attack of the real disease we can say they are immune for the rest of their lives, whereas immunisation only gives protection for, at present, an unknown number of years.

I think it might be profitable for me to set down the recommended periods for all immunisation procedure, including vaccination. They are as follow :

+ + + + +

Primary vaccination against Smallpox at 3 months of age.

First combined injection against Whooping Cough and
Diphtheria at 4 months of age.

Second injection at 5 months and third at six months.

The third combined injection may be postponed to 12 months.

<u>Poliomyelitis.</u>	Nil.
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Tuberculosis.

Cases on Register as at 31st December,
1954.

<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>		<u>Totals</u>
<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
29 (32)	25 (23)	4 (5)	10 (10)	68 (70)

Figures as at 31st December, 1953, are in brackets.

REPORT OF THE SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my second report on the work of the Public Health and Housing Department for the year 1954. It is gratifying to report that during the year steady advancement has been made in all branches of the work of the Department. Food traders in particular have been very co-operative in bringing their premises up to modern standards and the general standard of housing in the area is quite satisfactory. There are, however, some houses which will have to be dealt with under the Housing Acts in the near future.

Upon the decontrol of slaughtering in July, careful consideration was given to securing adequate slaughtering facilities in the area. After negotiations with neighbouring authorities the needs of the district were adequately provided for in an adjoining area some four miles outside the district.

In July, Mr. K.C. McCutcheon of Conisbrough was appointed as Additional Sanitary Inspector and Assistant Housing Manager to succeed Mr. J.C. Hale. I am pleased to report that Mr. C.H. Field was successful in obtaining the final examination of the Institute of Housing.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health and Housing Committees for the keen interest taken in the work of the Department and for their friendly and close support at all times.

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SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

General Sanitation.

Public Health Acts - primary inspections	..	174	
re-inspections	..	208	
Cesspools	..	61	
Disinfection	..	2	
Drainage	..	228	
Factories re-inspections	..	115	
Housing Act	..	178	
Infectious Disease	..	17	
Movable Dwellings	..	145	
Rodent Control	..	1,591	+
Shops Act	..	107	
Water Supplies	..	2	
Smoke Observations	..	15	
Miscellaneous Visits	..	29	
Workplaces	..	10	
Petroleum Regulations	..	37	
Outworkers	..	7	
Pet Animals Act	..	6	
Refuse Collection and Disposal	..	8	
		<hr/>	
		2,940	
		=====	

+ Includes 1,476 visits made by the
Council's Rodent Operative.

Food Hygiene.

Bakehouses	..	..	12
Butchers Shops	..	..	73
Dairies	..	..	37
Foodshops and Stalls	..	..	143
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	42
Restaurants	..	..	64
Milk distributors - sampling..	..	..	78
Fried Fish Shops	..	..	1
Slaughterhouses	..	..	12
Ice Cream Sampling	..	..	17
Meat Inspection	..	..	4
			<hr/>
			483

GENERAL SANITATION.

Complaints.

During the year, 219 complaints were received and dealt with; 142 of these were regarding infestations by rats and mice.

Disinfection.

Two premises were disinfected after cases of infectious disease with proprietary formaldehyde preparations and liquid disinfectants.

Drainage.

A considerable amount of work was carried out during the year in connection with the testing, alteration and repairs of existing drainage systems and 228 visits were made for that purpose. Following complaints of rat infestation, thorough checking of the drainage systems of all infested premises and those in the immediate vicinity was carried out.

The drainage systems of 197 new houses and flats constructed during the year were connected to the sewer.

Cesspools.

There were at the end of the year, 53 properties with cesspool drainage and in most cases the houses concerned are in scattered small groups where connection to main drainage is not practicable at the present time. Although it may be possible in due course to connect some of the properties with cesspools to main drainage, the majority will remain out of reach of public sewers for some time.

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Cesspool Emptying Service.

The Council bear the cost of one emptying of a cesspool each year for premises that are not within reasonable distance of the Council's sewers. This work was undertaken by a private firm of contractors until October 1954, when alternative arrangements were made with the St. Albans Rural District Council. During the year, 47 emptyings were carried out.

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948.

The following table shows the number of registered factories within the district, the number of inspections, and details of defects:

<u>Premises.</u>	<u>Number on Register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>
Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Local Authority.	7	15
Factories not included above in which section 7 is enforced.	59	94
Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	6	6
	<u>72</u>	<u>115</u>
	--	---

<u>Defects.</u>	<u>Number found.</u>	<u>Remedied.</u>	<u>Referred by H.M. Inspector.</u>
Section 1 ..	1	1	1
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.)	4	1	2
Other Offences ..	3	1	-
	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	=	=	=

Outworkers.

<u>Nature of Work</u>		<u>Number</u>
Wearing apparel - making etc	..	50
Brush making	.. ..	<u>1</u>
		51
		==

Movable Dwellings.

During the year, the use of caravans as a means of human habitation did not decline and at the end of the year 22 licences were in force authorising the use of caravans under the provisions of Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936. In addition, twenty caravans continued to be stationed on the Council's temporary site at Milford Estate. Particular attention was paid to the sanitary accommodation, drainage, refuse disposal, and water supply to each dwelling, and for this purpose 145 inspections were made during the year.

Notices.

The following notices were served during the year. Compliance with notices was effected without recourse to legal proceedings.

Statutory Notices:

Section 9 - Housing Act, 1936.

Notices served	..	-
Complied with by owners	..	-

Section 39 - Public Health Act, 1936.

Notices served	..	1
Complied with by owners	..	1

Section 93 - Public Health Act, 1936.

Notices served	..	1
Complied with by owners	..	1

Section 7 - Factories Act, 1937.

Notices served	..	-
Complied with by owners	..	-

Informal Notices:

Notices served	..	47
Complied with by owners	..	31

Rodent Control.

The extermination of rats and mice is carried out as a free service to the occupiers of private premises. A charge is made in respect of business premises at an hourly rate to cover the cost of labour, materials and administration.

One hundred and forty-two complaints concerning infestations by rats and mice were received and dealt with, resulting in the treatment of 380 properties. For this purpose 1,476 visits were made and 265 dead rats were found.

The Council employ one Rodent Operative (Mr. E.A.C. Faram) for this work. Mr. Faram received training under the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Scheme.

Sewers:

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, a ten per cent test of sewer manholes and two treatments of infested sewers were carried out during the year. 75 manholes were test baited, of which 5 were found to be infested. 47 manholes were baited during the two treatments. 6 were found to be infested during the winter treatment and 5 during the summer treatment. The treatments were followed by a check of house drainage systems in infested areas.

Council Properties:

Careful supervision of the Council's Depots and Stores was maintained during the year and any infestation of the Sewage Works and Refuse Tip was dealt with by the Manager.

Wasps' Nests:

41 complaints were received of wasps' nests and these were all successfully treated by the Rodent Operative.

Shops.

There are 194 retail shops in the district. The provisions of the Shops Act 1950 were administered and 107 visits were made for the purpose.

CONTROL OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES.

Meat Inspection.

All home killed meat consumed in this district continued to be distributed from Ministry of Food Slaughterhouses until the decontrol of slaughtering in July. Upon decontrol, a number of butchers formed a private company to take over and operate the Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse at Sandridge, in the St. Albans Rural District. Other butchers found alternative sources of supply and no animals were actually slaughtered within the district.

Owing to the numerous sources of meat supply, a careful check was kept both on the butchers' shops and on the transport and handling of the meat.

One private slaughterhouse in the area was licensed for slaughtering but this has now been discontinued.

The following meat and meat products were condemned as being unfit for human consumption at premises in Harpenden during the year:

Pigs Heads	..	..	Two
Beef	..	..	60 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Leg of Pork	..	..	12 lbs
Shoulder of Pork	..	..	4 lbs
Sausages	..	..	99 lbs
Sheep's Liver	..	..	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Tinned Meat and Meat Products	..	..	16 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Tinned Ham	..	..	75 lbs

Other Food Inspection.

The following foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption, and destruction or salvage was arranged:

Tinned Fruit	..	..	31 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Tinned Vegetables)	..	..	30 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Soups and Fish )	..	..
Raisins	..	..	30 lbs
Tinned Milk	..	..	6 pints

Food Premises.

Byelaws with respect to the Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food and Sale of Food in the Open Air were adopted by the Council in 1950.

By regular visiting and inspection, improvements were effected in hygienic conditions in foodshops, and retailers were generally co-operative in this respect. 483 visits of inspection were made to food premises, particular attention being given to cleanliness, water closet and washing facilities for the staff and protection of food from contamination.

12 premises in the district are registered for the manufacture and sale of sausages and one for the preparation and sale of fried fish and potatoes.

Ice-cream.

There are in the district 38 premises licensed for the sale or storage of ice-cream under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and in each case the ice-cream is obtained from one of the well known large manufacturers. Practically all the ice-cream sold is pre-packed. No licences are in operation for the manufacture of ice-cream.

A number of vehicles from which ice-cream is sold move into the district from neighbouring towns and at present the effective control of the sale of ice-cream from such vehicles is exceedingly difficult since they invariably operate at weekends and holidays.

During the year 17 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Luton for examination, and the results are set out below:

<u>Type of Sample.</u>		<u>Grade.</u>				<u>Total.</u>
		<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	
Pre-packed	..	12	1	2	2	17

N.B. Samples in Grades 1 and 2
are considered satisfactory.

Milk and Dairies Acts and Orders.

There are in the district 7 registered distributors of milk and three registered dairies.

The following licences were issued during the year:

Dealers' licences authorising the use of
the special designation.

Pasteurised	..	..	3
Sterilised	..	..	3
Tuberculin Tested	..	..	3

Supplementary licences authorising the use of
the special designation.

Pasteurised	..	..	2
Sterilised	..	..	2
Tuberculin Tested	..	..	2

There is one pasteurising plant in the district licensed by the Food and Drugs Authority, the Hertfordshire County Council.

Constant supervision of milk supplies was maintained and the following samples were taken during the year:

<u>Type of Milk</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>examined</u>	<u>Satis-</u> <u>factory</u>	<u>Unsatis-</u> <u>factory</u>
Pasteurised	36	34	2
T.T. (Farm Bottled)	22	18	4
T.T. (Pasteurised)	20	20	-
	<u>78</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>6</u>
	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>	<u>=</u>

Where unsatisfactory samples were obtained, further samples were procured and thorough investigations carried out in each instance. The two samples of pasteurised which failed to pass the prescribed tests were obtained from the same source but on different occasions. The failure was due to out of date processing equipment which has since been replaced.

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HOUSING.

The general condition of houses in the area is reasonably satisfactory and there is no "slum" problem as such. During the year 14 houses were represented as being unfit for human habitation and every effort will be made to rehouse the occupants of these houses as soon as possible.

Housing Repairs and Rents Acts, 1954.

This Act came into operation in September 1954 and amongst its important provisions it enabled landlords of privately owned houses to increase the rent in certain cases. It also safeguarded the tenants' interests enabling them to apply to the Local Authority for a Certificate of Disrepair where the tenant considered that his house was not in a reasonable condition. Where a Certificate of Disrepair has been granted in respect of a property, the rent of that property cannot be increased until the Certificate is revoked.

By the end of the year, 9 applications for Certificates of Disrepair were received and in each case the necessary Certificate was issued. Only one of these Certificates was revoked by the end of the year.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT.

The Council now own 550 houses, 154 flats, 66 emergency huttred dwellings and 25 prefabricated bungalows, making a total of 795 housing units. In addition, the management of 70 houses belonging to a Workmen's Housing Association is the responsibility of the Department.

During the year, the following visits and inspections were made in the performance of the duties of housing management:

To applicants	251
Maintenance	912
Administration	190
Tenancies	280

1,633

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74 applicants were rehoused during the year in permanent dwellings and a further 18 in temporary huttet accommodation.

Housing List.

The total number of applicants on the housing list at the 31st December 1954 was 347. This compares with 429 at the end of 1953 and 441 at the end of 1952.

A summary of applicants is given below:

<u>Housing applicants.</u>	<u>Active List.</u>	<u>Deferred List.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Married couples with children.	104	42	146
Married couples and engaged couples.	72	56	128
Single persons.	14	7	21
Old persons.	52	-	52
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	242	105	347
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All applications for housing accommodation are carefully scrutinised and points awarded strictly in accordance with the Council's points scheme. Special points are awarded for health reasons, overcrowding, insanitary living conditions, and shared accommodation.

The time necessarily devoted to interviews by the Department was considerable and applicants are assured that the circumstances brought to our notice are fully appreciated and due consideration is given to the facts of each case before reference to the Housing Committee.

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PETROLEUM REGULATIONS.

The provisions of the Petroleum Acts and Regulations are administered by the Department. 21 occupiers of filling stations, repair garages and other premises are licensed to store petroleum spirit, and 37 visits were made to such premises during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. SNOWDON,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

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